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Newton Abbot Rural District Council

ANNUAL - REPORT.

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

FOR THE YEAR

1948.

THOS. BROWN

M.D., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

Thos. Brown, M.D., D.P.H..

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR

A. Gray, Cert. R.S.I., Cert. Meat and Foods.

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

A.R. Smith, Cert. R.S.I., Cert. Meat and Foods.

Newton Abbot Rural District Council

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
COUNCIL OFFICES.

TELEPHONE NOS. 715/6

KINGSTEIGNTON ROAD.

NEWTON ABBOT

Mr. Chairman and Councillors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year
1948.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	92,650
Population - 1931 Census	20,788
Population - Mid 1948.....	24,460
Number of Inhabited Houses	7,212
Rateable Value as at 1st. January, 1948..	£134,124
Rateable Value as at 31st. December, 1948	£134,773
Product of 1d. rate (as at 1st. April, 1948).....	£ 564

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS.

The following table shows that the Birth Rate for the District is still below that for England and Wales as a whole. It shows a decrease on that of the previous year, the figures being 15.41 per 1000 total population for 1948, as against 17.6 per thousand for 1947.

LIVE BIRTHS.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate.	170	175	345
Illegitimate.	16	9	25
	<u>186</u>	<u>184</u>	<u>370</u>

Live Birth rate per 1000 total population - 15.41
Corresponding rate for England and
Wales - 17.9.

STILL BIRTHS.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate.	1	2	3
Illegitimate.	2	-	2
	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>

Still Birth rate per 1000 total population - 0.20.
Still Birth rate per 1000 total live births - 23.3
Still Birth rate per 1000 of civilian
population England and Wales - 0.42

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DEATHS.

The death rate for the Rural District is higher than the average for England and Wales, this will be seen from the accompanying table. The average age at death of all occurring during the year being 67.35 years. It would appear that the expectation of life for residents in the Rural District is slowly improving.

Death rate per 1000 resident population = 12.3
Death rate (England and Wales) per
1000 resident population. = 10.8.

Infant Mortality (Deaths of Infants under One year of age)

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate	1	6	= 7
Illegitimate	1	-	= 1

The Infant Mortality Rate (i.e. Deaths of Infants under One year per 1000 live births) = 21.04
The corresponding rate for England and Wales = 34.0

It will be seen that the infant mortality rate is considerably below that for the whole country.

AGE AT DEATH.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Infants under 1 year	2	6
1 - 5	-	1
5 - 15	3	3
15 - 25	3	3
25 - 35	1	2
35 - 45	8	7
45 - 55	11	12
55 - 65	25	18
65 - 75	52	27
75 and over	54	64
	<u>159</u>	<u>143</u>

Total - 302.

Natural increase of population (excess of births over deaths.) 68.

The chief causes of death were:

<u>Infectious Cases:-</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	6	5	11
Tuberculosis (Non - Pulmonary)	1	3	4
Pneumonia	1	2	3
Acute Encephalitis	-	1	1

<u>General Causes.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Syphilitic	2	1	3
Cancer	34	24	58
Diabetes	2	2	4
Cerebral Haemorrhage	14	23	37
Heart and Blood Vessels	53	45	98
Bronchitis	6	3	9
Other Diseases of Lungs	3	2	5
Diarrhoea under 2 years	2	1	3
Digestive Diseases	4	5	9
Nephritis	4	7	11
Premature Birth	-	2	2
Other Causes in Child Birth	-	3	3
Suicide	5	1	6
Road Traffic Accidents	1	1	2
Other violent causes	1	4	5
All other Causes	20	8	28
	<u>159</u>	<u>143</u>	<u>302</u>

It will be seen from the following table that Measles were the most prevalent infectious diseases, but the number of cases was not excessive and they were spread over a very wide area.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Scarlet Fever	-	2	2
Measles	24	23	47
Acute Primary Pneumonia	4	1	5
Acute Influenzal Pneumonia		1	2
Whooping Cough	5	1	6
Dysentery	1	-	1
Acute Anterior Encephalitis	-	1	1 (fatal)
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis	1	1	2
Diphtheria (not confirmed)	1	-	1
Erysipelas	4	5	9
	<u>40</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>74</u>

ACUTE ANTERIOR POLIOMYELITIS.

There were two cases only of Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis, neither case ended fatally. These cases were diagnosed because each developed characteristic paralyses. It may be that many more cases occurred, but were not notified, because of the difficulty of making a decision in the absence of symptoms of paralysis.

<u>Case.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Parish.</u>	<u>Age.</u>
1	12th. January, 1948.	Bovey Tracey	12 (F)
2	12th. January, 1948.	Bovey Tracey	13 (M)

As in the previous year, each case was closely inquired into as soon as it was notified but no factor could be determined that would help to trace the origin of these cases.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

On July 5th. 1948 the Devon County Council assumed responsibility for Diphtheria Immunisation. From 1st. January, to the 4th. July, 1948 all immunisation in the Rural District was done by the Medical Officer of Health. Sessions are still held at various School and Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics in the District, but this Service is now the entire responsibility of the County Council.

The following table shows the number of children immunised from the 1st. January to 4th. July, 1948.

Age groups of immunised children are given in the following table:-

<u>Age.</u>	<u>Numbers.</u>
0 - 1 year.	19
1 - 2 years.	63
2 - 3 "	6
3 - 4 "	6
4 - 5 "	1
5 - 9 "	12
9 - 15 "	3.

	110.

HOUSING.

Overcrowding is still prevalent throughout the District. Although the Rural District Council has done its best, so far as it has been allowed, to provide new houses; the supply seems to be no nearer overtaking the demand. Until a more substantial contribution to the solution of the housing problem has been reached, the Council cannot turn its attention to the demolition of insanitary houses, of which far too many still remain. Other factors contributing to the housing shortage are the difficulty in effecting repairs to defective but repairable houses that are in danger of falling into decay, the reluctance of owners to spend money on houses with restricted uneconomic rents, and by the shortage of essential materials.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Of the twenty-five parishes in the Rural District, all but twelve have a piped supply, taken chiefly from the Torquay mains, or those of Teignmouth and Paignton. Samples are not taken of this water as the Torquay, Paignton and Teignmouth Authorities carry out this duty.

Of the remaining thirteen parishes, six have a piped supply from springs or upland surface gathering grounds. These waters are sent to the County Bacteriologist at quarterly intervals for analysis. So far no complaints have had to be made. Three of the parishes, Moretonhampstead, Lustleigh and Bovey Tracey are supplied from upland surface sources and found to be slightly plumbo solvent are sent at frequent intervals for test during the year. Each of these waters is treated at source by passing over limestone chambers before being stored. The plumbo-solvency tests during the year have been satisfactory.


SEWAGE.

There were no major undertakings of sewage installation during the year 1948.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Addendum.

In addition to the 110 primary immunisations of infants and school children against diphtheria, 489 children were given "boost" doses of antitoxin at the various schools and clinics in the Rural District.


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Medical Officer of Health.

19th. December, 1949.

SANITARY OFFICER'S REPORT.

Refuse Collection.

This work is carried out with the Council's own staff with three low loading refuse collection vehicles, two vehicles being properly constructed and adequately covered for the purpose.

One 30 cwt. lorry is used for the collecting of Salvage and was also used for work with other Departments.

Most of the District was having a regular collection according to a prepared schedule, the more thickly populated portions being served weekly, other parts according to need are cleared fortnightly, monthly or quarterly. All districts are circularised as to the dates of collection throughout the year.

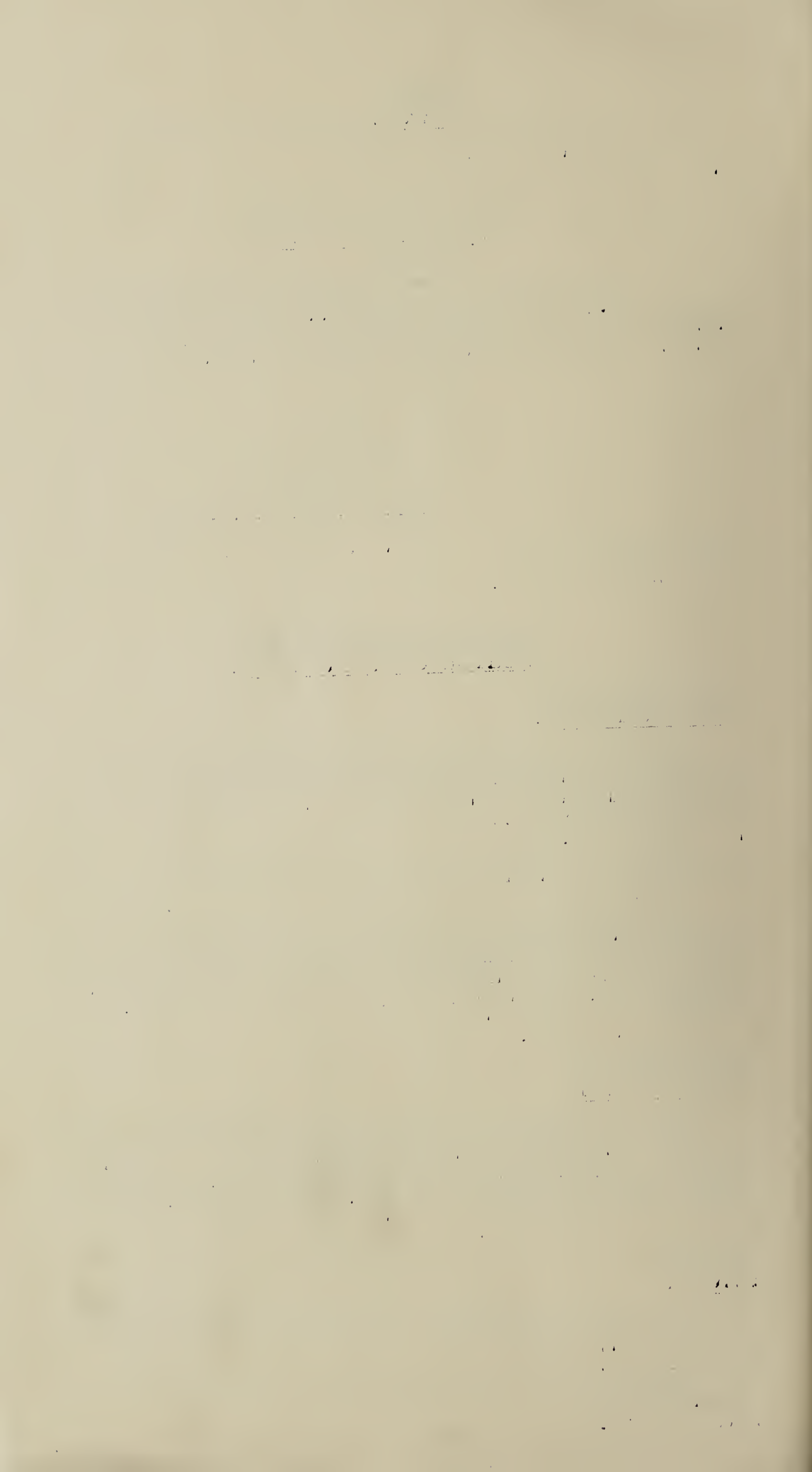
Refuse Disposal

Refuse is disposed of by means of the controlled tipping method at Bellammarsh near Chudleigh. The area, 21 acres, is leased to the Council by the Clifford Estate. One man is fully employed on the work and is assisted by the other men during their spare time.

Salvage.

The Staff and equipment on salvage at the end of the year were as follows:-

Two men sorting and bailing paper and rags at the Salvage Depot.



Two bailing presses (hand operated.)

In addition the lorry was regularly in use collecting throughout the area according to a prepared schedule and also dealing with any special requirements as to large quantities needing to be cleared between normal collection dates.

Salvaged Material sold to 31st. December 1943 was:-

	<u>Tons.</u>	<u>Cwts.</u>	<u>Qrts.</u>
Waste Paper	74	16	1
Ferrous Metals	8	6	2
Rags etc.	2	4	3
Bottles and Jars.	2	10	1.

Cesspools.

The work of cleansing cesspools is carried out by arrangement with the Newton Abbot Urban District Council who loan their Cesspool Emptyer to the Rural District Council, at the rate of 11/- per hour, this charge includes the running costs of the vehicle together with the wages of the driver and mate, and is passed on to the person having the work done. Arrangements have to be made for the contents to be disposed of upon private land so as to avoid nuisance.

Rivers and Streams.

Complaints were received as to the condition of Streams at Abbotskerswell, Netherton, Coombeinteignhead and Stokeinteignhead. The contaminated condition was caused by the discharge of the effluent from Cyder Works in the case of Abbotskerswell and Netherton, this was referred to the Devon County Council who are dealing with this matter, at Coombeinteignhead and Stokeinteignhead by reason of the discharge of Soil Drainage from the houses directly into the Streams in these two villages, this is becoming very serious and should be scheduled for prompt and urgent attention.

Rats and Mice Destruction Act. Infection Order, 1943.

The following is a summary of the work performed during the year, 1948.

No. of Surveys	261.
" " Visits to infested premises	1,010.
" " Baits	2,424.
" " Poison Baits	753.
" " Dead Rats (picked up).....	384.
" " estimated kill	348.

A General survey of the whole Rural District, approximately 4,000 individual premises were examined and surveyed

for the presence of Rodent.

The "estimated kill" based on the amount of Zinc Phosphide and Arsenic used was 348. The use of Red Squill accounts for the variation between the "actual number of bodies found" and the "estimated kill".

Infestations by mice were also dealt with and re-inspection proved the result to be most gratifying. Approximately 180 baits were laid, no estimate can be given as to the "kill".

All the sewers in the District were surveyed, test-baited, treated and maintenance treatments were carried out.

The Sewers at Chudleigh, Kingsteignton, Kingskerswell and Ipplepen were found to be badly infested.

Sewage Disposal Works were also treated with very satisfactory results. The Council's Refuse Dump was treated and large numbers were destroyed. This work had to be carried out during holiday period when the surfaces were undisturbed.

The Divisional Rodent Inspector expressed the view that the condition of the Council properties, sewers, outfall works and refuse dump, were all highly satisfactory at the end of the year.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Preliminary Notices served	875
" " complied with	732
Number of inspections and re-inspections made for housing defects	2,080
Complaints received and investigated	284
Personal interviews with owners and agents	1,022
Samples of water taken for analysis	9
Number of Inspections made in connection with Public Cleansing	327
Number of inspections and tests of New Drainage in connection with old property	124

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

Public Health Act, 1936 Section 269.

1. Number of Licenses issued for the stationing
 of Caravans etc. 64
2. Number of Sites licensed for Camping
 purposes 10

Factories Act, 1937.

The administration of the above Act in its application to the Rural District has been carried out, and regular inspections made, with particular reference to the cleanliness of premises and sanitary conveniences, water supply and drainage.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.

Inspections of farms and dairies were carried out during the year, and various notices served in order to secure the remedy of various kinds of defects, altogether 1,068 inspections were made.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933.

20 persons were licensed as slaughterers under the provisions of the Act.

Meat and Other Foods.

At the present time all Slaughtering is centralised being carried out at the Newton Abbot Abattoir within the Newton Abbot Urban District.

All carcasses are inspected by the Urban Sanitary Inspector and details are given in the Newton Abbot Urban District Council's Report.

The meat is then distributed to the various retailers in this Rural District, 24 in all.

It was, however, necessary to condemn 144 lbs. Beef throughout the year, on account of "bone taint".

Other Foods.

Inspections have been made of the shops etc. in the District with regard to cleanliness and facilities for the washing of hands etc. as well as for the soundness of foods.

During the year the following foods were surrendered as being unfit for human consumption:-

Foodstuff.

	lbs.
Bacon	7½
Fish (50 stones)	1,000
Fish Cakes	6
Grape Fruit	73
Prunes	25
Sausage Meat	7
	cans.
Fish	43
Fruit and Vegetables	152
Meat	44
Milk	23

Ice Cream.

The Ice Cream Heat Treatment Regulations were enforced as far as practicable in view of the short supply of the necessary equipment.

The majority of cases of registration have been for the sale of pre-packed Ice Cream which is produced by firms of good repute. It has been the practice to advise applicants to adopt this method in preference to making Ice Cream on their own premises.

Food Poisoning.

There were no outbreaks of food poisoning during the year.



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Senior Sanitary Inspector.

19th. December, 1949.

